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4 January 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Geographic Research

SUBJECT: Data on Caribbean Project (60.1800)

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1. The Caribbean Project was laid on in September 1959, following receipt of a request from [REDACTED] Chief of Paramilitary Division, PP, dated 25 August 1959. The project was delayed in its initial stages by delays in the establishment of a PM Staff in WH with which we could work.

2. As it stands, the Project involves the production of geographic intelligence support for operational planning on the following countries:

Cuba  
Haiti  
Dominican Republic  
Nicaragua  
Honduras  
Guatemala

Formal requests will probably be received later for similar work on Paraguay and Bolivia. In addition, we anticipate that requirements may be forthcoming at any time on Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama, and Venezuela.

3. Each country is being handled separately in priority order. The work is being turned out in Parts, which are delivered as completed. For Cuba, the Parts are the following:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| I - VII   | Detailed analysis of selected key areas for operations   |
| VIII - IX | Open, for additional area analysis that may be required. |
| X         | Terrain  |
| XI        | Transportation   |
| XII       | Population   |
| XIII      | Armed Forces   |
| XIV       | Climate  |
| XV        | Vegetation   |
| XVI       | Telecommunications                                       |
| XVII      | Coasts and Ports   |
| XVIII     | Fuels and power  |
| XIX       | Town plans   |

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By memorandum dated 20 November 1959, ACSI was asked to make AMS help available on elements of Parts X - XIX, particularly Part XIX. ACSI was unable to give complete satisfaction because it has its own formal program, starting with Ecuador, which must take precedence. However, they promised to assist us by giving priority to certain topics we need and by letting us use their material in draft stage.

4. In addition to turning out finished reports, we are assisting WH by trying to devise sanitary map materials that may be used in the field. This is a very difficult problem for all of the countries concerned, and will generally be met by a spot updating of available maps or aerial photos, reproduced in a form which conceals U.S. involvement. D/GC will be heavily involved in this activity.

5. The Project is demanding because of the exceptional poverty of basic source material on Latin America. Maps are generally small scale and very outdated. Aerial photography is spotty and usually not recent. Only small parts of the NIS are completed. Materials on Cuba, for example, are by far the best, but cannot be used in the field without substantial processing: of the 320 sheets at 1:50,000 compiled by Aero Service, all contain cultural feature errors and only 180 are presently known to be printed and available in Cuba -- AMS is printing the remainder but these will be rigidly controlled; other maps are 1:100,000 dated 1934, with unreliable 1909 information; photography is mostly adequate, though of varying scale and date -- photography flown by Aero Service is unavailable because of funds required (\$38,500); *except climate* there are no military geographic sections of the NIS published or in work. In the case of other countries, the Landing Beaches part of the NIS is sometimes available, but maps are limited to old 1:1,000,000, spot 1:250,000 and Esso maps; photography is a hodgepodge, with many holidays.

6. Research on Cuba will be completed on or about 1 February; one Part has been delivered. The other countries will then be taken up on a ASAP basis. I estimate that some 2,500 manhours are required to accomplish research on the first six countries. D/GC's effort is additional. The big difficulty of course, is urgency. Three people are presently assigned to the Project; if things begin to pop, we will have to cut into our bone in D/GG and Cartography may have to advise WH to seek a short-time slowdown in the NIS Program.

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Chief, Geography Division

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